



Argentini

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20520

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December 6, 1979

To: ARA - Mr. William G. Bowdler

From: HA - Patricia M. Derian

Thanks for your memorandum of conversation with Cavandoli.

Whenever something important is coming up (i.e., a big Ex-Im loan or vote in a bank and, in this case, the country report), Ambassador Espil has a series of luncheons with journalists, members of the business community and, this year, B'nai B'rith leaders. USG officials are visited, formally and informally, by private Argentinian citizens of some stature who the government hopes we can find credible (some certainly seem to be). Sometimes the government reaches out to the U.S. public through advertising campaigns. While the message has become more sophisticated (they've dropped the original thrust which aimed at having us accept the premise that there was no alternative to their "dirty war," concede governmental "excesses" and deplore the disappearances), they have not relinquished their original objective, they want us to remain silent.

At the same time, there are strong indications that they are, through the government of Israel, blackmailing Timerman to remain silent about his own experience, Bob Cox's threat level has risen to the point that he is leaving the country, torture continues, disappearances, though diminished, continue.

Your response was right on the money.

Welcome to the blitz.

cc: HA - Messrs. Flood, Cohen
and Salmon.

HA:PMD/cpj

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